2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

much less effective as a source of news than is the press. It was also found that the farther away from towns respondents live, the less information they get from friends and the more from newspapers: only for items of local news are friends everywhere more effective than newspapers as channels of communication. When a Tamil newspaper reaches a village it commonly circulates and is read aloud to a much larger number of people than one copy could reach in a town. The wide circulation of papers and the presence of well-educated men even in out-of-the-way villages helps explain the unusually high levels of knowledge about the world beyond the Nilgiris that Badagas now command.

NETWORKS OF COMMUNICATION

Beside the traditional marriage and exchange networks which supplied Badagas with their basic needs, there have always been social networks through which important information has passed by word of mouth. These have been modified and amplified in the present century and have become linked to some extent with the mass media (on networks, see Hockings, 1977, *passim*).

In Hulla:da, a typical Badaga village, there are now four types of network: intra-village, inter-village, inter-tribal and a new type, village-and-town. Each of these categories can be subdivided according to the following outline.

Intra-Village Networks

There were in 1963 several different adult male *loci* for decision making and opinion formation. The most important here, as in nearly every village, were these:

(1) the traditional council, and especially the village headman;
(2) the festival committee;
(3) elders of the four indigenous lineages and of a fifth composite group of more recently settled families;
(4) three middle-aged, influential men;
(5) the local Swatantra Party organizer;
(6) the educated young men.

Two or three of these groupings may operate together in popularizing an idea or solving a problem that faces the village. In a class by

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

themselves are the women's work-groups, small cliques of village wives who work together in the fields and elsewhere, exchanging gossip and favours in the process. These female networks link up with the male ones through the wives of influential men (cf. Plate 10).

The sequence of contacts that have to be made if someone in the village is to influence or be influenced by people in the above list constitutes an intra-village network.

Inter-Village Networks

Two kinds of network fall under this heading, one linking agnates, the second affines. The first are ritual and juridical networks, linking up with distantly related men in other villages of the commune. This commune was first settled, it is claimed, by a man who founded the maximal lineage to which nearly all of the inhabitants belong. Hulla:ḍa people mostly belong to one of the three major lineages, this one established by Koṅga Hetappa, one of the commune founder's three sons. Within Hulla:ḍa and a nearby village (Ke:ti) the lineage is further divided into four minimal lineages, each descended from one of Koṅga Etappa's four sons. The more important festivals are celebrated in common by all sixteen villages in the commune, using ritual personnel from any of these villages. Serious problems are discussed by all the village headmen at the commune council. Hulla:ḍa villagers can establish contact with the wealthiest and most influential men in the commune by activating these two networks, either through a village headman or through a friend who has helped in the rituals.

Secondly, the marriage and visiting networks link Hulla:ḍa with villages beyond this commune. Marriages account for a network of social contacts with nearly two dozen other villages, and these are frequently activated by informal visits and by attendance at the festivals, weddings and funerals of affines. Small loans may be sought along these networks (Hockings, in press).

Inter-Tribal Networks

The Badagas of Hulla:ḍa were linked for certain economic and ritual purposes with particular Kotas, Todas, Kurumbas and Chettis. For the most part these associations have fallen into

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

between the two, or between a father and his daughter, has often led to a divorce.

In the estimate of one good informant, when incest occurs within the family it is most often with an elder brother's wife, and less commonly with a son's wife or with the father's second wife when she is a man's stepmother. Mother/son, father/daughter and brother/sister relations are the rarest of all, if indeed they ever occur.

The above seven types of illicit relationship are listed in my informant's order, going from (*a*) the most common but least serious, to (*g*), the most uncommon and offensive. Despite the considerable amount of evidence collected on these various types, I was told by old people that it used to be thought a very bad thing for a husband to commit adultery, and if his wife or another person found out about it she would go to the village headman who would call a meeting of the council and then fine the guilty person: in adultery the man was always at fault.

Among Badagas the public attitude towards a cuckolded husband is that he is a foolish, weak and lazy man, for otherwise his wife could not have been led astray. However, his wife also loses all respect with the other village women, who may well fear that they could lose their own husbands to her too. Nor can the adulterous man expect any accolades for his behaviour. Today a case of adultery may go before a council, which can still fine the adulterer; or her husband may quietly divorce an adulterous wife; or he might give the adulterer a beating, provided he had some alternate explanation for it to offer his neighbours.

Attitudes towards extra-marital love and prostitution are clearly expressed in Badaga proverbs and legends. Witness the following still current proverbs: "Three things are equal to each other: a harlot, an adulterer, and a piece of ground which is always in danger of being washed away by a river" (Metz 1864: 97); "If the food is spoiled, the day is spoiled; if the wife is spoiled, one's life is spoiled;" "The immoral woman will not believe her own husband;" "The whoremonger will vanish away like a handful of wind" (Metz 1864: 98); and again, "Lust is deceitful, I have lost my blanket through it" (Metz 1864: 96). A few lines from an epic poem conjure up a vision of limbo that is worthy of Dante's *Inferno :*

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

833 course simply to please their parents; or so that the husband will not be suspected of impotence by his watchful relatives; or so that his parents may not accuse the girl of being barren; or, when one of them does want intercourse, the other does it merely to oblige. Pub-
(208) lic opinion is an important factor in sexual relations, and it must if possible be satisfied by a pregnancy. If a couple have no children
842 a divorce may be forced upon them after a while, even if neither
586 of them wants that. When a couple have no children outsiders start
208 asking their parents, "What is the matter with them?" Interestingly, loose talk of this sort will be directed towards the childless husband before people — primarily his parents — begin to attach any blame to the girl.

833 Older couples who have several children continue to engage in
887 coitus either for pleasure or out of habit, I was told. Men may con-
886 tinue into old age, perhaps performing the act no more than once a month; but women tend to lose interest once menopause has set in, and are often not in the best of health by that time. A small mino-
587 rity of widowers decide they have the strength to remarry and provided they are wealthy enough to support another wife may intimate this interest to a male friend of equal age. He will tell the old man's sons and daughters about the idea, and these children will then look around for a new stepmother. This however will only occur after they have tested the old man's capabilities. One test is to have some-
(514) one observe him when he urinates: it must be noted whether the flow
(827) of urine was strong enough to make a slight hole in the mud, which would be taken as an indication of suitable strength. A further test
587 might involve the wife of his younger brother. She would be deputed
835 to catch him somewhere privately where she might suggest particular women for him, or even go so far as to assay his capabilities herself. Such an affair would be impermissible if the old man were related as a "husband's father" to her — albeit a classificatory one. But otherwise, provided the affair were handled with discretion, it would be quite acceptable for her to have relations with a husband's brother. Furthermore "it is quite common for a widow to marry her
587 brother-in-law" ("Miles" 1933: 74). In the past a wealthy old widower
833 might ask a younger man to find him a wife. If successful in this he would probably locate a young but barren woman, who might well complain right away that such an old man could not satisfy her. This dilemma was sometimes overcome when the go-between undertook to satisfy the woman provided she married his older friend.